

**State Science Advisory Council
Held October 16, 2002
Utah State Capital, Room 223
2:00-4:30 p.m.**

Those in attendance:

Troy Takach
Mike Brehm
Gary Hooper
Dennis Sauer
Susan Johnson
Michael Keene
Greg Critchfield
Ron Pugmire for Ray Gesteland
Brent Miller
Gary Wixom for CeCe Foxley
John Bennett for Mark Bedel

Guests present:

David Clark-Utah Dept. of Ag and Food
Greg Lavine-SL Trib
Dale Barnard-USU
Jenifer Lloyd-Utah Dept of Health (Speaker)
John Morrey-USU
Steve Erickson-Citizens Education Project (Speaker)

Mr. Troy Takach called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. The minutes were approved as written. Motion made by Susan Johnson, second by Gary Hooper

Committee Reports:

Nominating Committee-Susan Johnson-Packets were sent out with resume's of potential new committee members. Dennis indicated that he did not see Mr. David Fisher's resume, he would like to nominate him as a candidate. This resume will be forwarded to the proper individuals and included with the others. At this time, Mr. Oren Phillips, who is with the same company as David Fisher, his name will be withdrawn from the potential candidates. Gary Hooper will provide the vitae of Mr. Carl Wittwer from Idaho Technologies as well. Names and summaries will be forwarded to each member with the opportunity to vote then after each vote has been received, the list will be forwarded to the Governor's office.

Governor's Medal-Brent Miller –A major restructuring of the Governor's Medal nomination process happened last year. The same forms will be used for this year with updated information including verbiage indicating that teams will not be accepted this year. A schedule/timeline was provided by Mr. Miller. The first mailing will be sent out the first week of November, with a follow-up mailing in December. At the December meeting the committee members will be finalized. The due date for nominations is January 15, 2003 then distribution of nominations to committee members. Reviews will be conducted through January 24 – February 28, 2003. Full packets will be requested on February 28 and final recommendations will be sent to the Governor's office by the end of March with the award ceremony held in late April early May.

The question was asked as to what type of background checks are made by Mr. Ron Pugmire. He was concerned that a previous recipient was fired from their place of employment at the time of award. **FOR THE RECORD: Mr. Pugmire rescinded his**

comment due to confusion of names with faces. He submitted an apology to the entire Science Advisory Council stating that he was in err, the recipient was NOT fired from the place of employment, it was another individual that was not nominated for the Governor's Medal.

HSL Committee – Mr. Mike Brehm – A five page white paper was produced from the committee from the SAC in response to a request from the Governor to determine the viability of a potential BSL4 site in Utah. It is on the web site. The key findings included the need for public information due to a very complex situation. Therefore, a public comment forum was provided via the State Science Advisors website. Press releases were sent out notifying the public of this forum requesting comment. The BSL4 research was in response to an RFP made by NIAID and NIH to create Regional Centers of Biodefense Research and Biocontainment Laboratories to develop new diagnostics, vaccines, and treatments for diseases caused by intentional release of pathogens into a civilian population. The NIH has been directed to discover therapies, vaccines and rapid diagnostic tools against viruses and bacteria to protect the citizens. (This information regarding the RFP was provided by USU's white paper).

Presentations –

Dr. Jenifer Lloyd, DVM, MSPH - West Nile Virus. A handout was provided regarding West Nile Surveillance in Utah. Dr. Lloyd indicated that the virus transmission has not been identified in Arizona, Utah, Idaho, Oregon, Nevada, Hawaii and Alaska. In August there was one human with the virus and the transmission mode was unknown. In October, one dead raven was found with the virus. There are a number of things that the Department of Health is doing to identify the virus in dead birds, horses and notifying health care professionals. The greatest impact of the virus will most likely be in horses, in terms of numbers.

During a question and answer period, comments were made about the swiftness a vaccine was established, if the reagents were available to provide a vaccine to horses etc. An economic impact has not yet been established. People over the age of 50 and diabetics seem to be affected the most from the virus. The cost to nurse a horse through this illness is very expensive and the mortality rate is at approximately 1/3, this could decrease if the owners could afford treatment.

BSL4 in Utah – Dr. Michael Keene - Dr. Keene stated that as the State Science Advisor, he is not a spokesperson for the Governor and that the Science Council has been asked to provide this information in a non-biased format, this information is for educational purposes only. Proposals are submitted and prepared without notification to the public; therefore, Utah State provided the information to the public on their own accord. The facilities would be operated through Utah's universities. This proposal does not have anything to do with military operations. Dr. Keene provided information from research regarding infectious diseases from a publication written by the National Intelligence Council 2000 entitled "Global Infectious Disease Threat" and its implications for the United States. It was indicated that the most infectious diseases now are HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C, TB and other variants of Influenza.

After Dr. Keene's comments, comments and discussion were made from the SAC regarding the transmission of diseases such as global trade, global transportation of people-international travelers, with input from Utah State University.

BSL4 - Mr. Steve Erickson- Mr. Erickson provided the SAC with the opposing view of locating a BSL4 facility here in Utah. The Citizen's Education project is non-profit that educates the public on issues of social economic and environmental justice. Additional outreach is encouraged for the SAC to receive more information from the public. There are 14 proposals to build BSL4 laboratories along with the current six already in operation. The Citizen's Education project feels that this is unnecessary duplication and a waste of taxpayer's resources. The issue of public health preparedness should be of more concern and focus and be the responsibility of the people at the front lines, such as Emergency Rooms, homeless clinics etc. The medical community is in need to be more informed about the communicable diseases and other pathogens that are not readily recognized out there and teach general understanding.

A question and answer period followed Mr. Erickson's presentation regarding the BSL4 labs and use of the aerosols at the facility and more information about the use of funds to educate the medical community.

The floor was opened to public comment from the gallery.

There is a document available for the public to read at the NIAID's website titled NIAID Biodefense Research Agenda for CDC regarding agents etc. that are pertinent to this subject.

AGENDA ITEM: Invite a public health official to speak regarding the spread of infectious diseases.

AGENDA ITEM: Draft of the bylaw adjustment regarding the change of meetings. As right now, the bylaws do not indicate the meeting schedule. Mr. Takach will make up a draft.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.